



Superior Court of California County of Orange

NEWS RELEASE

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HARBOR JUSTICE CENTER DRUG COURT OPENS

Newport Beach - The Orange County Superior Court, Harbor Justice Center, located on Jamboree Road in Newport Beach, will begin holding Drug Court on **Monday, July 17, 2000**. Judge Geoffrey T. Glass will preside over the court. Commissioner Mark J. Sheedy will provide additional judicial resources as needed. The Harbor Justice Center Drug Court is a rigorous but non-traditional court program aimed at rehabilitating drug abusers from Costa Mesa, Newport Beach, Irvine, Laguna Beach, and the unincorporated areas of Santa Ana Heights. With the commencement of the Harbor Court Drug Court, there will be a drug court in every courthouse in the county.

The Orange County Drug Court program is a collaboration of the Orange County Superior Court, the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Probation Department, the Health Care Agency, the Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies.

The mission of the program is to provide a non-adversarial response to select non-violent offenders charged with felony drug possession. Through comprehensive treatment and supervision, the program seeks to enable participant addicts to become drug-free, productive members of the community. The four-phase program has intensive supervision by a drug court probation officer, individual and group counseling provided by the Health Care Agency's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, and frequent court appearances to discuss the participant's progress. Further, participants are subject to search and seizure during the program and are frequently contacted by probation and law enforcement personnel at their homes to ensure compliance with program requirements. The participants are required to submit to routine and frequent drug tests, attend self-help meetings (AA, NA, etc.), maintain employment or enroll in an educational or vocational training program, or both. Participants are required to obtain their GED before drug court graduation if they do not possess a high school diploma or GED. In addition, participants with young children are required to attend special parenting and educational classes.

Drug Courts have come a long way since their inception in 1989; there are now more than 400 drug courts operating nationally. In California there are more than 80 jurisdictions operating drug courts serving a client base of over 8,000. Drug Courts are actively involved in breaking the cycle of drug addiction and crime in our communities and successfully graduating productive citizens. In addition to the new program at Harbor Justice Center (Newport Beach), Orange County operates drug courts in the South Justice Center (Laguna Niguel), the Central Justice Center (Santa Ana), the North Justice Center (Fullerton), and the West Justice Center (Westminster). A juvenile drug court program began in September, 1999 at the Lamoreaux Justice Center (Orange).

For more information, contact Verna Blouin, 949-476-**4634**
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